

2.5 Husky Drop Zone Improvements, YTA

USAG-AK has proposed to upgrade the Husky Drop Zone within the Yukon Training Area (YTA) (Figure 6). The upgrades would include improving an existing access trail to a permanent year-round access road. Additionally, a large staging area for training exercises would be constructed on the east side of the drop zone. The purpose of these upgrades is to improve access and control erosion by improving drainage through grading, establishing ditches, installing geotextile and fill material and confining activities to hardened surfaces. The upgrades will also allow the accommodation of large scale brigade size training exercises. The proposed upgrades to the Husky Drop Zone are located on map quadrangle FAI D1 in: T2S, R3E, Sections 1, 2 and 12.

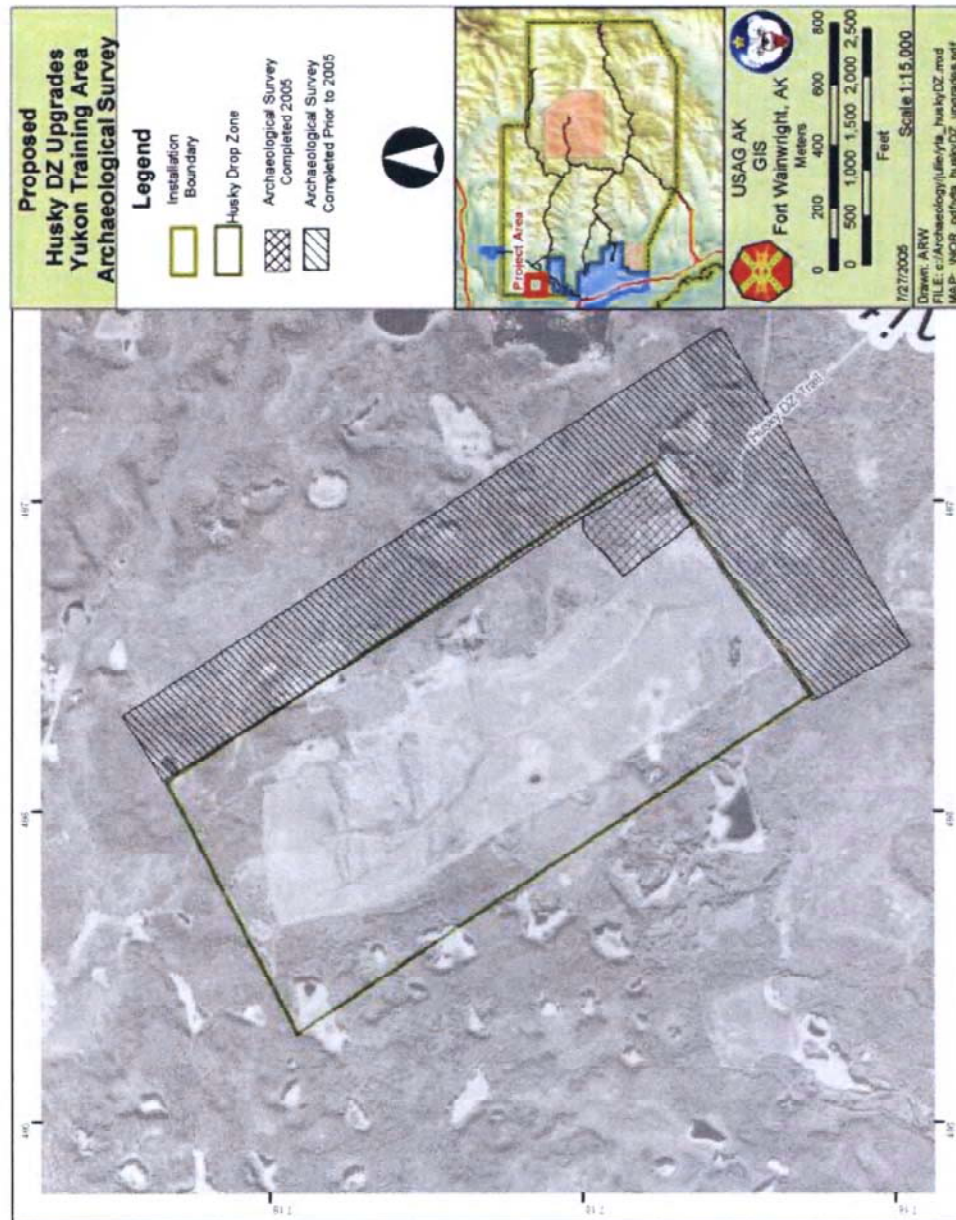


Figure 6. Husky Drop Zone and archaeologically surveyed areas

Survey and Field Methods

In July 2005 the location of the proposed upgrades at the Husky Drop Zone were investigated by a crew of four archaeologists employed by the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML, Colorado State University)

Parallel pedestrian transects spaced at 20 meters or less were walked in all areas that were not deemed too wet or too steep ($>40^\circ$) to contain cultural material. Systematic sub-surface testing was undertaken in areas determined to be high probability (e.g., lake margins, ridges, benches adjacent to steeper slopes) during initial review of the proposed project area, and as determined by the supervising archaeologist and field crew leader based on survey findings. In addition to pedestrian transects, 40cm x 40cm shovel tests were excavated in the project area. All excavated material was screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ " hardware cloth. None of the shovel tests excavated contained any cultural material.

The existing access trail to be upgraded into a year-round access road currently runs the length of the drop zone. This trail runs through an extremely wet area with a low potential for containing cultural resources. The wetlands character of the currently cleared drop zone, through which the access trail runs, was determined through wetlands maps, various aerial photos, and on the ground observation. No transects were walked through this area and no shovel tests were excavated. A staging area for training exercises is proposed for the area along the eastern border of the drop zone. This area is slightly higher and drier than the cleared drop zone itself. The eastern border of the drop zone was archaeologically surveyed and tested in 2002 and in 2005. No cultural resources were located during these investigations.

Cultural Resources

There is one known site in the vicinity of the proposed project. This site has been determined to be outside of the project area.

FAI-01156

Latitude:

Longitude: (NAD 27)

Determination: Not Evaluated

This site consists of chert flakes found in a series of shovel tests on a bench above Horseshoe Lake. UTM coordinates for this site are Zone 6, easting 498072 and northing 7182192. This site lies outside the area of potential effect for the proposed upgrades at the Husky Drop Zone. This site has not been evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and no additional action is recommended at this time.

Results

No cultural resources were identified within the project area for upgrades at the Husky Drop Zone. Site FAI-01156 is located outside of the area of potential effect for this project. All other previously-recorded archaeological sites and historic properties in the Yukon Training Area also fall outside the project area. USAG-AK determined that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.